

**Michigan Unmanned Aerial Systems  
Task Force Meeting**  
Minutes of Meeting  
April 22, 2021

Pursuant to Section 31 of Act 436 of the Public Acts (PA) of 2016, the members of the Michigan Unmanned Aircraft Systems Task Force, created by said Act, met via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, April 22, 2021, commencing at approximately 10:00 a.m.

**Members Present**

Sgt. Scott Baldwin – Port Huron  
Marlon Brown – Mason  
Daniel Coffey – New Buffalo  
Michael Darrow – Bay City  
Joseph Faust – Location not recorded  
Michael Heise – Dafter  
John Hill – Traverse City  
Kevin Jacobs – Roscommon  
Christopher Johnson – Northville  
Katie Jones – Northville  
Kevin Klein – Traverse City  
Ben Marchionna – Ann Arbor  
Melinda Marion – Plymouth  
Justin Morren – Chyna  
Randee Rewerts – Carson City  
Michael Trout – Clarklake  
Brian Zakrzewski – Eaton Rapids  
Bryan Budds (Task Force Advisor) – Howell  
Alicia Morrison (Task Force Analyst) - Lansing

**Members Absent**

Corbett Adkins  
Craig Amey  
Michael Benkert  
Andrew Cardinale  
Bradley Chambers  
Jon Cool  
John Flanagan  
Michael Olson  
Daniel Pepper

**I. Opening Remarks**

The April 22, 2021 Michigan Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Task Force meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mike Trout at 10:01 am.

Chairperson Trout welcomed all those joining via video and conference call.

**II. Roll Call and Introductions**

Alicia Morrison conducted a roll call. Each member was asked to state their location and give a brief introduction of themselves and their interest in UAS.

**III. Approval of the August 18, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Chair Trout asked if there were any revisions to the minutes of the meeting held on August 18, 2020. Melinda Marion stated on Page 2 the abbreviation for the Michigan UAS Consortium should be corrected to MIUAS. This change was noted and made. Chair Trout then entertained a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was

moved by Daniel Coffey and seconded by Kevin Klein to approve the minutes with the correction noted above. A vote was conducted. All voted in favor. Chair Trout announced the motion is carried.

#### **IV. Task Force Administration**

Chair Mike Trout reviewed the Task Force's membership and meeting rules.

- a. Members serve four-year terms or until a successor is appointed by the Governor. Appointment information can be found at <https://www.michigan.gov/whitmer/0,9309,7-387-90501---,00.html>.
- b. Meetings must be held in a "central part of the state" and at least every 18 months.
- c. A majority of the 27 appointed members must be present to constitute a quorum.
- d. The Task Force is subject to both the Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act.

#### **V. Recap of Initial Task Force Actions and Recommendations**

Bryan Budds, Task Force Advisor, Office of Aeronautics (Aero), gave a recap on the initial actions and recommendations of the Task Force.

- a. Task Force established goal is "...considering commercial and private uses of UAS, landowner and privacy rights, as well as general rules for safe operation of UAS."
- b. The following initial policies were established:
  1. Restricts UAS interference with first responders.
  2. Restricts UAS in harassment of individuals.
  3. Restricts UAS use to invade reasonable privacy.
  4. Restricts local municipalities from regulating UAS.
- c. The following recommendations were made, and progress is noted:
  1. Establish a UAS Joint Program Office – Ongoing
  2. Recognition of the Michigan UAS Consortium – Completed
  3. Affirm role of the Michigan Aeronautics Commission – Completed
  4. Codify Extension of Self – Completed
  5. Explore Unmanned Traffic Management – Ongoing
  6. Prohibit interference with key and unique facilities – Completed
  7. Clarify interference with public safety officials – Completed
  8. UAS Integration Pilot Program submissions – Ongoing
  9. Maintain communication with federal partners – Ongoing
  10. Support American Center for Mobility on UAS/Connected and Automated Vehicle integration – Ongoing
  11. Support UAS education, outreach, and data policies – Ongoing

#### **VI. Industry Highlight Presentation**

Dorcia Chaison, Michigan State University (MSU) and Tony Sauerbrey, Northwestern Michigan College (NMC) presented on drone education and research opportunities at MSU and NMC. Mr. Sauerbrey gave an overview of the drone program at NMC and their partnership with MSU College of Agriculture. He explained and gave examples of how drones are being used in agriculture throughout the state. He also gave detail on the course content and how students

travel to various areas and get to experience hands on, real world scenarios for drone use.

Chair Trout asked what challenges or road blocks the programs had faced, if any. Mr. Sauerbrey answered there were very few, mostly being internal scheduling issues with the students, especially during the pandemic. He stated there had been great openness and support from both the UAS and agriculture industry.

Kevin Jacobs asked whether the program used fixed wing or rotor wing craft. Mr. Sauerbrey answered that multi-rotor usually was the most efficient. He stated fixed wing craft had endurance, but required more set-up and prep making it less efficient for student use.

Matt Quinn, Great Lakes Drone Company, stated the challenges on how to share airspace stating this is a good chance for collaboration between educators, and both industry and private users.

Chair Trout noted in the pictures shared by Mr. Sauerbrey that the drones had an N number on them and questioned whether this was issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). It was answered that these were older pictures on drones operating for over 10 years and those numbers have now been removed. Kevin Jacobs added that Department of Natural Resources crafts also have N numbers.

Aaron Cook asked a broader question on how the state works with aviation facilities for UAS use and whether an airfield can be closed, but still usable for UAS. Bryan Budds responded that there are several unique partnerships around the state with airfields and UAS. Generally, the decision is deferred to the airfield owner and UAS is considered a traditional aeronautic user when deciding.

## **VII. Federal Rulemaking Update**

Michael Soper, Aero Electronics Unit Supervisor, presented on federal UAS rulemaking, including an in depth look at the following:

- a. Part 107 Changes from Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to Final Rule
  1. Testing and recurrency requirements
  2. Paperwork and inspection requirements
  3. Major changes to night flight
    - No longer waiver-able
    - Pilots must complete night flight training course
    - Aircraft must have anti-collision lighting
  4. Major changes to flight over people
    - To include flight over moving vehicles
    - Adds four categories to operate under flight over people
- b. Part 89 Changes from NPRM to Final Rule
  1. Operational requirements
  2. Manufacture requirements

Additional information on these rule changes can be found at [www.Michigan.gov/aero](http://www.Michigan.gov/aero) or questions can be directed to Michael Soper at [SoperM1@michigan.gov](mailto:SoperM1@michigan.gov). or 517-335-9237.

## **VIII. State Strategic Visioning**

Bryan Budds shared some general national UAS statistics including remote pilot distribution; registered recreational flyers; non-model registrations trends and locations; and past and future forecast of larger UAS fleets in National Air Space.

Bryan Budds then discussed the possibility of drone registration in Michigan. As of January 2021, there are 9,748 commercial UAS FAA registrations and 14,575 recreational UAS FAA registrations in Michigan; however, there is limited data available to the state. Unregistered drones potentially cause challenges for law enforcement, aerial traffic planning and others. Future discussions on the development of a Michigan registration process will be occurring with the group and others.

In preparing for the future of UAS, Bryan Budds posed the following topics to consider:

- a. Safety and security concerns
- b. Public acceptance
- c. Economic development
- d. Who has authority

In addition, the assumptions are made that UAS will continue to grow statewide and throughout the nation, package delivery will become commonplace, advanced aerial mobility will continue to mature, and regulatory airspace structure will continue to evolve.

Bryan Budds discussed the Request for Proposals (RFP) that Aero currently has posted on its SIGMA system to contract for a feasibility study. This study will look at possible corridors and first steps in advanced aerial mobility in Michigan. The contract is expected to be awarded this summer. Additional information on the RFP can be found at <https://sigma.michigan.gov/webapp/PRDVSS2X1/AltSelfService>.

Michigan is preparing to be ahead of the curve as states will likely have a large role in UAS integration. Michigan currently does not license, register, or provide oversight to UAS operating in the state, and has limited data on utilization of UAS and advanced air mobility. These initiatives, along with UAS program development and public and private partnerships, are all areas for future discussion, with an anticipated next meeting date for the Task Force in late 2021.

## **IX. Task Force Open Discussion**

Chair Trout opened the meeting up to all members for an open discussion.

Daniel Coffey asked what the definition of a corridor was for the RFP purposes. Mike Trout replied for MDOT it is generally a defined area with roadway assets.

Marlon Brown thanked the Task Force for their work and noted his appreciation for being part of the group. He then asked how many other states register UAS aircraft and/or pilots. Chair Trout replied that Aero is currently working to gather that data. Michael Soper replied that North Carolina is currently doing registration of the

equipment, but not pilots. Ben Marchionna and Matt Quinn confirmed that Minnesota is registering both equipment and pilots.

Joseph Faust added that FAA information and input can be found at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).

Larry Bowron thanked the Task Force for their work and stated he is looking forward to being a member and continuing to assist Michigan in being a leader on UAS initiatives.

**X. Public Comments**

No official public comments were noted.

**XI. Closing**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

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Mike Trout, Chairman